Special cooling suit designed by defence scientists

2538. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that defence scientists have designed a special cooling suit for soldiers deployed in areas that are in high temperature zones;

(b) if so, whether these suits have been supplied in all high temperature zones;

(c) whether the scientists who designed these suits have suitably been rewarded by Government; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir. A prototype of solid state cooling suit has been designed for use by the tank crew operating in high temperature zones.

(b) No, Sir. The suits have not yet been supplied as the system is till under development. The R&D trials of the first prototype of this solid state cooling garment have been highly satisfactory in the Laboratory set up and in the tank.

(c) and (d) The stage of reward by the Government has not yet reached.

Indo-US joint action against terrorism

2539. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and the US have agreed to counter mass destruction terror jointly;

(b) if so, whether the US team will work with its Indian counterpart in a Table-top military exercise to counter terrorists who have weapons of mass destruction;

(c) whether there could be a joint military training and exercise to

deal with terrorism in the context of Kashmir; and

(d) if so, to what extent this will help to check the terrorists activities in Jammu and Kashmir?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) India and US have identified counter terrorism as an area of bilateral cooperation.

(b) to (d) It would not be possible to give further details in the interest of national security.

Exacting norms for defence purchase

2540. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that new norms for defence purchase are considered too rigid by representatives of defence industry as mentioned in the news-item "Defence purchase norms exacting" appeared in the Hindu of 17th March, 2002; if so, their objections; and

(b) what steps, if any, are proposed to be taken to relax the norms?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir. Government has not received any representation from the defence industry regarding the norms being rigid.

(b) There is no proposal under consideration of the Government to relax the norms.